



State of Arizona

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Governor Jan Brewer Announces Arizona's Inaugural Poet Laureate

PHOENIX - Governor Jan Brewer today named renowned poet and Regents' Professor Alberto Rios as the State of Arizona's inaugural Poet Laureate.

In honor of Arizona's Centennial year of statehood, Governor Brewer last year signed into law SB 1348, making Arizona the 43rd state to establish a Poet Laureate. The purpose of this position is to commemorate Arizona literary artists whose work and service best represent Arizona's values, independence and unique Western history and culture.

As Poet Laureate, Mr. Rios will champion the art of American poetry throughout the state – providing statewide outreach and education about influential Arizona poets and inspiring an emerging generation of Arizona literary artists.

"An Arizona native and nationally-recognized champion for American poetry, Mr. Rios' work has been extensively published and widely celebrated for nearly four decades," said Governor Brewer. "His affinity and talent for storytelling, whether through writing or performing, will make him a strong advocate for poetry in Arizona. I'm confident Mr. Rios will set the bar high as our state's first-ever Poet Laureate."

Alberto Rios has taught English at Arizona State University since 1982. In 1989, he earned the status of Regents' Professor, the highest-attainable faculty rank in the university system. His array of acclaimed works includes ten books of poetry, three books of stories and a personal memoir of his upbringing in Nogales, Arizona. Additionally, Mr. Rios' poetry has been featured in a documentary, musical composition and more than ninety national and international literary anthologies.

Mr. Rios has been recognized with numerous awards, including: six Pushcart Prizes in poetry and fiction; the American Academy of Poets' Walt Whitman Award in Poetry; the Western Literature Association's Distinguished Achievement award; the Arizona Literary Treasure award; the Governor's Arts Award; and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mr. Rios received a Bachelor of Arts (1974) and a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (1979) from the University of Arizona.

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